

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

**The claims are amended as follows:**

1. (Amended) A tape reel comprising:

a hub having a cylindrical shape; and

an upper flange and a lower flange respectively provided at an upper end and a lower end [ends] of said hub,

wherein a magnetic tape is wrapped around an outer peripheral surface of said hub, and

means for gradually decreasing a distance between said upper flange and said lower flange outside an outer peripheral surface of the hub, as said magnetic tape is being wrapped around said hub, by deflecting said upper and lower flanges towards each other over an entire circumference thereof

[as said magnetic tape is going to be wrapped around said hub, a distance between said upper flange and said lower flange becomes gradually decreased in the outside from an outer peripheral surface of the hub].

**Claim 3 is added as a new claim.**